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Shall We Dance? The Re-housing and Digitization of Gettysburg College Dance Cards

Abstract

The Gettysburg College Dance Card Collection contains over 100 dance cards from multiple accessions and of differing sizes and materials. The collection was previously kept in small, cramped boxes; its re-housing and digitization were an evident necessity. The needs and goals of this project were two-pronged: first, establishing physical and intellectual control over the items by building custom housing and enhancing item descriptions; and second, creating a digital collection featuring samples and highlights of the dance cards.

Keywords

dance cards, preservation, Gettysburg College, digitization

Disciplines

Archival Science

Comments

This poster was presented at MARAC, the Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference, held April 14–16, 2016, in Pittsburgh, PA.

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Shall We Dance?

The Re-housing and Digitization of Gettysburg College Dance Cards

By Avery Fox and Alexa Schreier

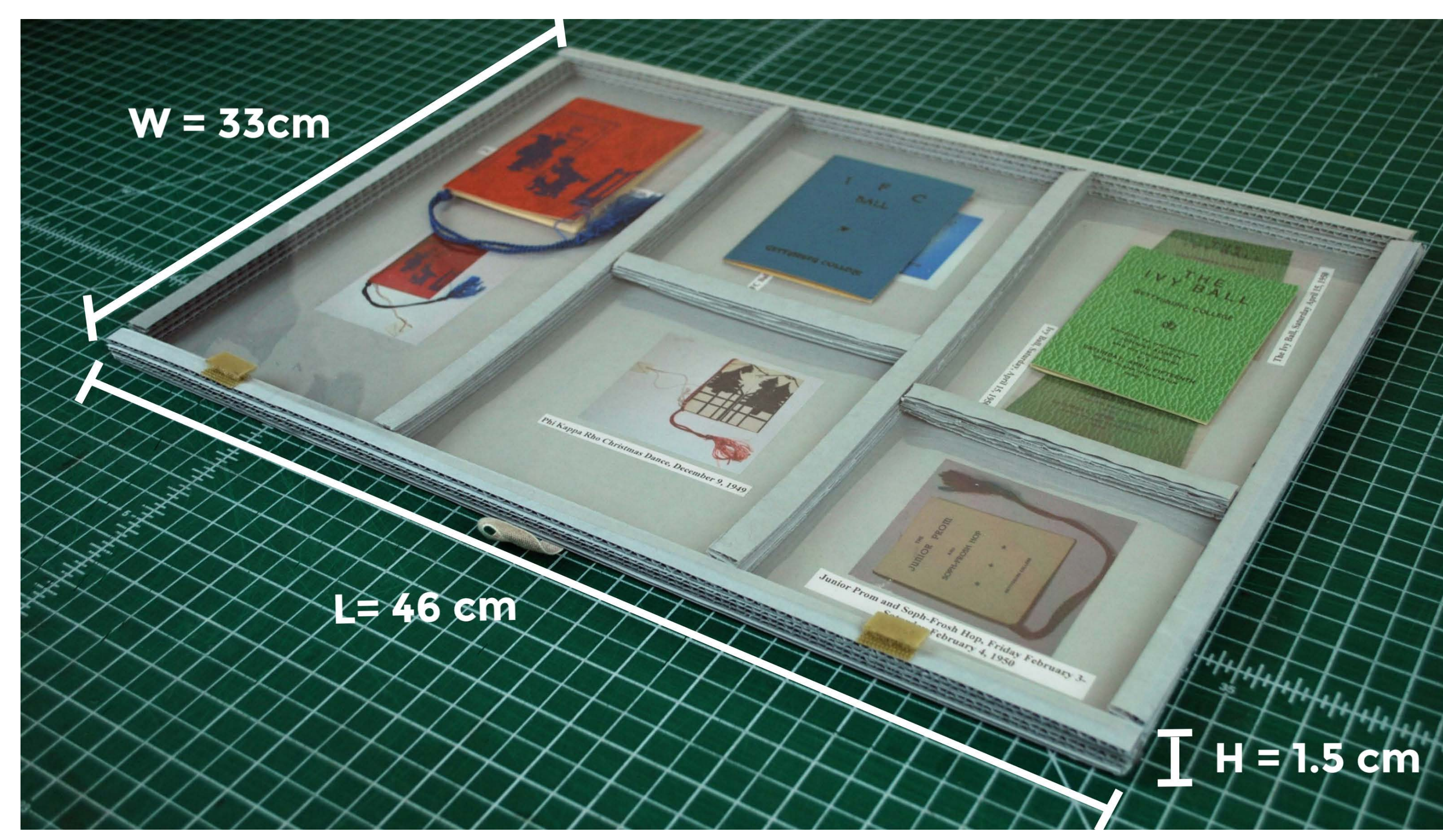
Abstract

The Gettysburg College Dance Card Collection contains over 100 dance cards from multiple accessions and of differing sizes and materials. The collection was previously kept in small, cramped boxes; its re-housing and digitization were an evident necessity. The needs and goals of this project were two-pronged: first, establishing physical and intellectual control over the items by building custom housing and enhancing item descriptions; and second, creating a digital collection featuring samples and highlights of the dance cards.

Methods

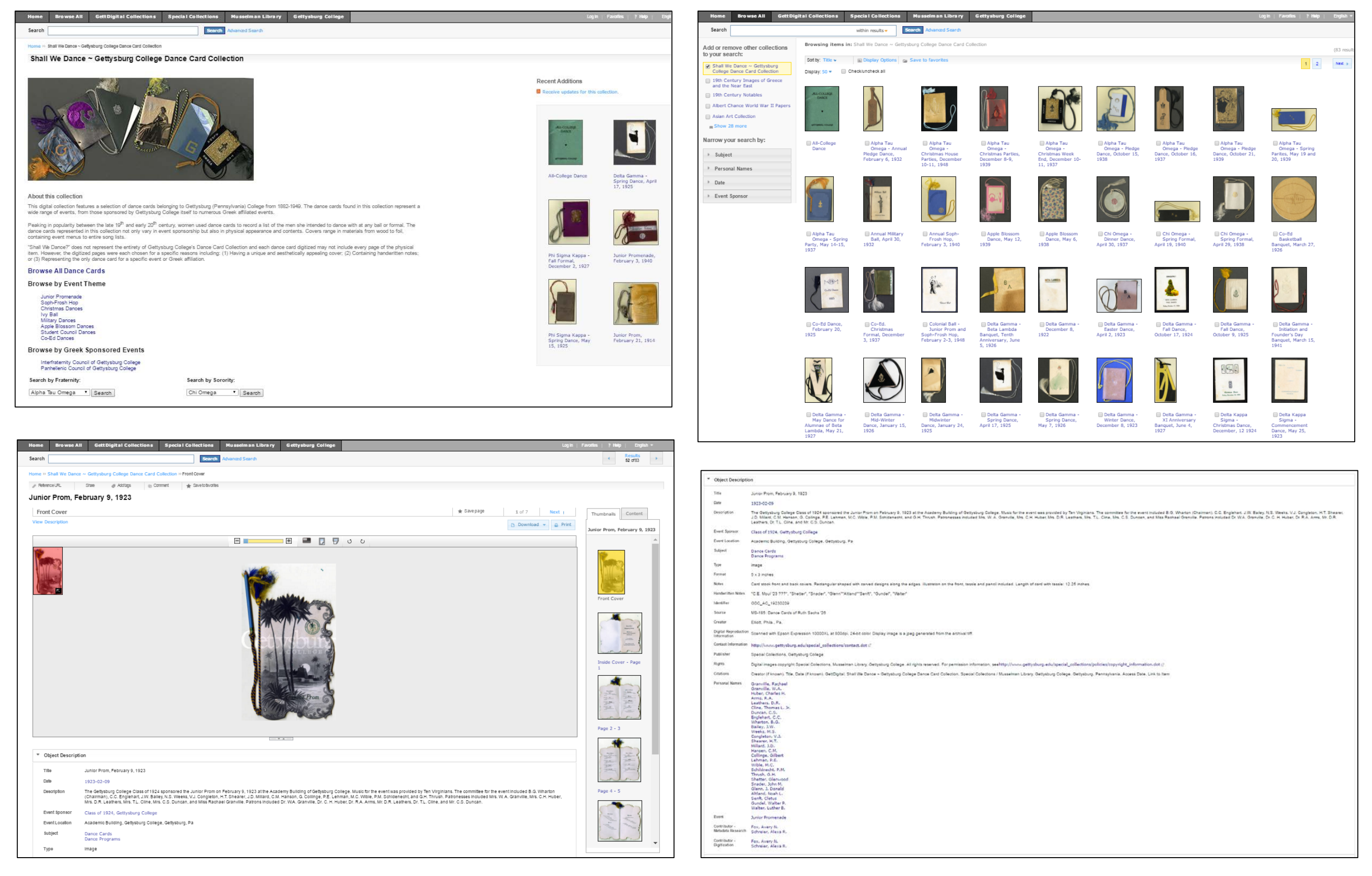
The methods utilized to establish intellectual control included inventorying, photo-graphing, and ordering the dance cards chronologically. Physical control was imposed by creating custom housing for the dance cards, based on the measurements of each card. The materials used for the re-housing included polyvinyl acetate glue and single wall Perma/Cor B-Flute Corrugated Board for the base of the tray, and 3mm MYLAR to create a removable protective cover for each individual tray. The physical re-housing of the cards prompted the creation of a digital collection, accessible via CONTENTdm. An EPSON EXPRESSION 10000 XL scanner was used to digitize the dance cards.

Re-housing



Digitization

The images below highlight each layer of the digital collection, from the landing page with searching options, to the metadata of each dance card.



Discussion

The primary implications of this project include:

- Extending the longevity and physical preservation of the dance cards. Previously stored haphazardly, the cards were highly vulnerable to damage.
- Significantly improving user searchability and access after the re-housing. Students and patrons were previously unable to efficiently browse and use the collection.
- Designing the project for sustainable growth of the collection in the future.
- Increasing the collection's discoverability with to its availability online.

As the largest freely available digital dance card collection online, "Shall We Dance?" has an impact beyond Gettysburg College patrons, and will benefit individuals around the world.

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